



# State of Louisiana

## Department of Environmental Quality



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### **TOXICS RELEASE INVENTORY PROGRAM TO HOLD NATIONAL PUBLIC DIALOGUE**

(Baton Rouge) -- In a move to promote public participation, the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) is reporting a new initiative launched by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) that seeks to obtain suggestions and ideas on EPA's methods for reporting, collecting, processing and releasing data for the Toxic Release Inventory (TRI) program. The Stakeholder Dialogue will be conducted on-line from October 16 to December 17, 2002.

TRI is a program that avails information to the public on annually reported toxic chemical releases and other waste management activities by covered industries and federal facilities through a searchable database. Given the community focus and the broad and varied uses of the TRI data, DEQ is encouraging stakeholders throughout the state to participate in the Stakeholder Dialogue.

The stakeholder process consists of two phases. Phase I will focus on the reporting, collecting, processing, and annual release of TRI data. During this phase, EPA's goal is to use links to the dialogue to obtain comments on how to improve the compliance assistance provided by the TRI program to aid the reporting community, how to streamline the collection and processing of the annual forms, and how well the materials EPA develops for its annual public release of the TRI data supports their use and analysis of the data. To meet this goal, EPA also has posted three on-line papers that raise issues for stakeholder input in those areas. The links to the issue papers provide background and also on-line boxes to submit remarks. The dialogue links contain comments already submitted not posted in real time but made available overnight.

Phase II of the Stakeholder Dialogue will focus on the future directions for the program, including what data are collected, how the data is characterized, and whether additional data should be collected. A final report summarizing the stakeholder input will be made available after the on-line dialogue period closes and the ideas and suggestions have been analyzed.

DEQ is calling on environmental groups, community groups, researchers, industry and any other interested parties to participate in the process by visiting the On-line Dialogue ("Virtual Public Meeting") EPA web site <http://www.epa.gov/tri>.